CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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FROM THE UNIVERSALIST EXPOSITOR.

MODIFICATIONS OF THE POPULAR DOCTRINE OF ENDLESS MISERY.

The design of this article being somewhat novel, we would have the reader clearly apprized of the course we intend to pursue. Our immediate aim is not to confute the doctrine of endless misery; but to point out the inconsistency of certain modifications it appears to be undergoing. Some of our speculative divines, unwilling to dispense with so imposing a tenet, and feeling, nevertheless, unprepared to maintain it in all its native barbarity, have hoped to accommodate it, in a degree, to the dictates of reason and humanity. But while attempting this, they seem wholly to forget the ground on which they rest the very doctrine itself. With an oversight, remarkable, but not uncommon with ingenious speculatists, they in the first place, advance the general hypothesis on certain alledged proofs; and then they proceed to modify it till they remove it entirely from the reach of those proofs, even were the original appositeness admitted: thus leaving the structure, much improved perhaps, but deprived of its foundation.

The exposure of this fact, if made with sufficient plainness, will lead the advocates of the doctrine to see that they must either bring it back to its proper though horrible character, or abandon it altogether. In such an alternative, we doubt not that many of them will choose the latter course; and when the case becomes generally understood, we believe that the tide of improvement, which is already felt, will be directed more fully to the abolition of the obnoxious dogma, instead of being diverted in vain attempts for its amendment.

The sole ground on which endless misery is believed and urged, as an article of the Christian religion, is, if we mistake not, the supposed fact that the Scriptures teach it; or, at least, that they explicitly mention a punishment in eternity, without warranting the hope of its termination. It is on the Bible, we are told, that the doctrine rests. And if, for the purpose of reducing the question into a definite compass, we ask, on what part of the Bible? a multitude of noted and oft repeated texts is brought forward. As it is important to mark the character of the testimony on which so much depends, we shall do well to insert it at some length. It consists of such passages as the following:

'As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.'* 'We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ; for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.' So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.† 'We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.'‡ 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. . . . Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. . . . . And these shall go away into everlasting punishment,'* 'I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.'† 'After thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds.'‡ 'Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh. . . . . Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.'§ 'Said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house hath risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are; then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.'‖ 'The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.'** 'The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever; and they have no rest, day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.'††

These and all similar texts relate directly, it is affirmed, to the future world; and on their authority, when so applied, is the notion of endless misery maintained. Take these away, and it would no longer exist, as a part of the Christian faith. It might, indeed, be still cherished, possibly, and offered as a mere philosophical conjecture, like the theory of Burnet concerning the earth's creation and changes, or that of Darwin concerning the origin of the moon and planets; but it would cease from our pulpits, our creeds, and our courses of religious instruction, and retire to the closet of the student, and the brain of the speculatist.

Now it is manifest that a doctrine which claims to be founded immediately on these texts, must, in order to preserve any consistency, be carefully modified according to the tenor of their testimony. If they teach the fact, they just as authoritatively teach the mode. And indeed we find that the notion of endless misery, such as it is in the common vulgar acceptation, is, for the most part, well enough conformed to the language of these passages, admitting that they refer at all to the subject. After death, or at the end of time, there is to be a general judgment; when all nations, all mankind, are to stand before the tribunal of Christ, and be judged and sentenced with regard exclusively to the characters formed, and the deeds done, while in the body. Those who shall be found to have led lives of wickedness, or to have died without saving repentance, will be consigned to eternal torment for the sins they have committed in this world. Though the intenseness of their sufferings will vary according to the magnitude and number of their past transgressions, yet the very smallest degree will be unspeakable and unconceivable, such as Almighty wrath can alone inflict. Then will the miserable wretches seek to return to God; but no place for repentance will be granted. Then shall they cry aloud for merey; but they have entered a world of retribution, not of trial; their day of grace is past; and Jehovah mocks at their pain. They have incurred an infinite debt of vengeance; eternity itself is but sufficient to punish the irremissible guilt.

Such is a faithful though rather moderate statement of the popular doctrine of endless misery. And it is apparent, at first glance, that its several particulars have a general correspondence with the respective representations in those scriptures which are relied on for its support, and which, for the sake of the argument, we must now take it for granted, relate to eternity. Let the reader look back, and consult them again, and he will see that they assert the alleged process of a general judgment, the retrospective reference of the decision and of the succeeding punishment, and the terrible vehemence of the torment, together with the implacable character of the wrath of Heaven. This, then, is the proper, genuine state of the doctrine. So it has been taught, urged, and declaimed upon, for ages; and so it is held, at the present day, by the common mass of its believers.

But in this state, it is so manifestly the doctrine of infinite cruelty, that many of its staunch advocates themselves quail before its diabolical aspect. They cannot shut their eyes to the immeasurable disproportion between eternal, Almighty torture, and the sins of frail mortals in this momentary life; and if they attempt to cover the injustice of such an infliction, under the plea of divine sovereignty, conscience has something to say of the base and damning malignity of a spirit that perpetuates its revenge on a helpless dependant. In such a dilemma, it has been felt, that there remained but one way to rescue the favorite hypothesis from certain condemnation: and that was, by amending it, by prudently sacrificing a part to preserve the general whole, and by shifting it from its native principles to others less shocking to our common sense of propriety.

Accordingly, when pressed upon this point, its defenders now tell us that men will indeed be punished eternally; not however, for the sins

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* Heb. ix, 27, † Rom. xiv, 10—12. ‡ 2 Cor. v, 10

* Matt. xxv, 31—46.
‡ Rom. ii, 5, 6.
‖ Luke xiii, 23—27.
†† Rev. xiv, 10, 11.
† Matt. xiii, 36,37.
§ Prov. i, 24—28.
** 2 Thess. i, 7—9.

of this life; for that, it is acknowledged, seems unreasonable; but for sins which the victims will persevere in committing, through the boundless ages of the future world. And since it is right, and even inevitable, that they should suffer so long as they continue transgressors, divine justice is, on this principle, fully vindicated in its everlasting retributions.*

This, indeed, seems a very happy improvement. Who now can question the justice of the act, terrible though it is? But it must not be overlooked, that here the doctrine is removed entirely from its old hereditary ground, where it has hitherto been so hotly defended. That famous position, the infinite demerit of sin, which was long maintained by the incessant repetition of one solitary scholastic argument, is abandoned; and endless punishment is now to be inflicted only for continued, endless transgression. What have we to say against the hypothesis, when thus explained?

Nothing—except that it ought to have, at least, some degree of affinity with the proofs claimed for its support, instead of being directly repugnant to them. What are they? Why, that the scriptures assure us, (so it is alleged,) that hereafter, in the final judgment, Christ will consign those on the left hand, to everlasting fire, to everlasting punishment; not because of the sins they may still continue to commit, but for the reason, expressly stated, that they had heretofore, or while in this world, neglected to administer unto him: 'depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink, &c. Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye dit it not unto me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.' Accordingly, we are told, it is as plain as language can make it, that they will be punished eternally; not for the sins of this life, it is added, but for those of the future. Let the reader mark this contradiction. Another proof, said to be equally decisive, is, that when the rich man lifted up his eyes in the torments of hell, and begged of his father Abraham a little respite, he was irrevocably denied with this answer: 'Son, remember that thou, in thy life time, receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now, he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.'† On the strength of this favorite text, we are sometimes threatened with damnation ourselves, if we do not acknowledge that in eternity an impassible barrier will separate mankind, and that the prayers of the sufferers for release or mitigation, will be inexorably refused; not, however on account of their previous condition in their lifetime, but for the characters which they shall then continue to sustain. Our brethren should be a little more consistent, when they back their arguments with such menaces. They likewise support the general doctrine in question, on the remark of St. Paul, that 'we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.' Here, it is said, a future judgment is asserted, that is to be followed by punishment for the bad, as well as reward for the good; but, then the punishment will be inflicted for 'the things done in'—eternity, instead of—in 'the body.' In this way we might proceed, pointing out the same direct contradiction between other alledged proofs and the hypothesis itself which is rested upon them.

It will be pleaded, perhaps, that we seem disposed to take an undue advantage of this oversight; because we have kept out of view the fact that there are texts also of another kind, which are used as evidence of endless misery: texts, that threaten punishment, without pronouncing whether it be for past or perpetuated sin. St. Paul says, for example, that they who know not God, nor obey the gospel, 'shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.'‡ As we are not, in this instance, expressly told that it is on account of former instead of continued disobedience, that the destruction is to be everlasting, we are fortunately left at liberty, it may be contended, to form such an opinion, here, as we please, on the point in question; so that the advocates of the doctrine may safely repose it, even in its modified state, on this passage and on others that happen to be equally indefinite.

Very well. Then they will, of course discharge from their service all those texts which, on the other hand, are definite in this respect, and which they have hitherto claimed with so much assurance, not to say superciliousness. Nor must they stop here. They must join with Universalists, and against all their former explanations, criticisms, denunciations, and even anathemas, they must proceed to show that the parable of the sheep and goats, that of the rich man and Lazarus, the declaration of the apostle that we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the things done in the body, and all other passages of this class, have no relation whatever to punishment in eternity; for it is manifest that if such be their reference, that punishment is to be inflicted for sins committed here, not hereafter. What way will they turn? Will they at once relinquish all these passages, which have, in fact, been regarded as their leading proofs? If so, they should be aware that when they have referred these, the most terrible of the threatenings to the judgments of time, they will never be able to show that the remainder of the catalogue may not as properly be explained in the same manner; so that they will thus abandon the very last defences of their doctrine. Or will they turn to their old position, and facing down all reason and justice, maintain, as formerly, that the infinite amount of eternal torture is but an adequate retribution for the sins of this short life? We discover no intermediate course.

Thus far we have dwelt on the absurdity of this modification when compared with the texts adduced as proofs. Now we are to see that it is altogether incongruous with other important particulars in the scheme; and that so long as this improvement, so called, is retained, the general system must be inconsistent with itself. Its advocates make great account of a a general judgment at the close of time and opening of eternity; when all mankind, from Adam to the latest generation, shall stand at the bar of God, to undergo the scrutiny of omniscience, and to receive pardon or final doom. Final doom for what? Not for sins yet future, we suppose; not for transgressions never as yet perpetrated. And still we are told that the punishment awarded in that doom is to be for continued and eternal sin, not for that which shall have transpired in the present life. Here is no little confusion, which we should be glad to see cleared up by the theological ingenuity of our age. On the old ground, the great day of future judgment was appointed for the purpose of determining the characters and deserts which mankind should already have acquired, and of pronouncing sentence accordingly; but what is its use or object, on the new plan, we neither perceive, nor imagine that the divines, who take upon themselves the regulation of such mysteries, have yet resolved. Let them be reminded, that in repairing an old garment with pieces from a new, there is danger that the parts will not agree, and that the rent will be made worse.

There is another and more thorough modification of the doctrine of endless wo, which obtains among certain Liberal and Rational christians. Future punishment they see clearly taught in that class of texts from which we have quoted; and they discover no evidence entirely satisfactory that it will not be eternal. At the same time, however, they abhor the diabolical cruelty of the old doctrine, and the unreasonable severity retained even in the latest orthodox improvements. They are pleased to say, not only that mankind will be punished hereafter merely for the continued transgressions of eternity, but also that the punishment itself will be nothing more than the guilt which sinners now feel in their iniquity. The future state, they conceive, is to be but a continuation of the present, so that the wicked will enter upon it with the very same characters and feelings with which they pass from this world. If they afterwards reform, their guilt will grow proportionately less;

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* *The American Tract Society*, the best authority, perhaps, for the *present* fashion of Orthodoxy in our country, have resorted to this principle. In answer to the objection, that endless sufferings, inflicted as a punishment for sin are unjust, they demand, 'Can you see any injustice in God's leaving creatures, who have voluntarily rebelled against him, to continue in sin forever; and if they continue to sin forever, may not God justly punish them forever?' To this appeal they subjoin the following note: 'Sinners will deserve to be punished as long as they continue to sin. If they sin during the whole of life, they will be exposed to sufferings during life: if for a thousand years after death, they will deserve to suffer during that time; if eternally, their punishment will have no end. To disprove the justice of future endless puishment, then, it must be shown, either that sinners will cease to sin, or that God is under obligation to reclaim to obedience beings who are voluntarily engaged in rebellion against him.' (Tract, No. 224, pp. 44, 45.) Before taking leave of the last sentence in this extract, we must, in justice, commend to competent casuists the question, how much stronger is the moral obligation to torture a sinner, than to reclaim him, when both courses are equally practicable?

Dr. Lyman Beecher, a gentleman of some influence among the Orthodox of New England, is reported to have used the following language, in defending the justice of endless misery: 'Again, we are not punished forever, for the sins of this short life. This is a mistake. Man is a free agent; and free agency extends through eternity. If there is such a thing as free agency, it may exist beyond the grave. The Universalists admit that sin is punished here, if not hereafter. The law, and the subjects of the law, must, in either case, be alike. For if sin exists, it must be punished while it exists; and if it exist forever, the punishment must be endless. The punishment of the eternal state treads upon the heels of eternal transgression. If the soul rebel in its future state it will be punished 'where the worm never dieth, and the fire is not quenched'—because sin is its fuel. The doctrine ot the Bible is, 'If ye do not repent, ye shall all likewise perish:' if ye do not repent in this life, ye shall never repent. The Bible says not a word about punishing men for ever for the evils of this life. Suppose a being to continue in sin—when he dies, is he fit for heaven? And as he is a free agent, does he not deserve a punishment which never ends?' (Report of Dr. B's. Sermon against Universalism, delivered at Dorchester, March 7th, 1830. Boston, pp. 8, 9.)

President Dwight, whose character and attainments give his opinions much weight with the divines of his school, has taken the same ground in combating the objection, that God cannot justly punish the sins of finite creatures, with infinite or endless punishment. 'God may justly punish sin,' says he, 'so long as it exists; and it may exist forever. He who sins through this life, may evidently sin through another such period, and another, and another, without end. That while we continue to sin, God may justly punish us, if he can justly punish us at all, is equally evident. Such is the principle on which he defended the justice of endless punishment. It may be well to observe, that *the American Tract Society*, by adopting this plea, have made it their own. (Tract, No. 181, p. 7.)

† Luke xv. 23—26. ‡ 1 Thess. i, 7—9.

if they sink deeper in sin, it will increase. But in either case, it will be about the same, both in kind and degree, with that which the like imperfection or wickedness produces here.

Now, if endless punishment must be taught at every expense whatsoever, this, we confess, is as mild and liberal a construction of the doctrine, as can well be devised. But still the question recurs, On what is all this hypothesis founded? On the sacred testimony, that some 'shall depart into everlasting fire,' and be 'tormented in this flame,' where 'shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth;' that they 'shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation;' and be tormented with fire and brimstone,' so that 'the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever,' &c. &c. Does this language mean nothing but a sensation of guilt; and that too, only in the ordinary degree? If so, it was absurd to represent the sufferers as *departing* into it, or indeed, to denounce it upon them as something then future; for the truth was, they were already in it—as properly so before, as after, they died. Turn to the several passages, read them with their respective contexts, and it will be manifest that they announce some extraordinary and signal inflictions of punishment, to whatever state of existence they refer. If to this world, they signify some uncommon and terrible events, some condign, external retributions of a just providence; if to the future, they teach, not properly speaking a state of guilt, but rather an open and formal visitation of judgment in that world, dreadful beyond all that sinners had experienced previously, or, in the present. In this case, christians are precluded, by the authority of revelation, from representing the punishment of eternity either as a continuation of our present accusing conscience, or as a recompense for sins to be committed hereafter. The same alternative that was before presented, still remains: either to release all those texts from the cause of endless damnation, or else to restore the doctrine to its native ground of pure vindictive torture and undissembled cruelty.

Is there no eye-salve for the learned criticism of our age, that will give it a reach of vision to take in the contexts and manifest circumstances of these noted passages? With all its array of Greek, Hebrew and cognate languages, at least characters, must it always continue to peer into the depths of its philological excavations, and never raise its ken to survey the fields it has mined instead of cultivating? Let but the scholar trace the original, and the unlearned the translation, with a broad view to the general current of the discourse, rather than to minute and insulated particulars, and they will readily discover that the texts in question have no reference to the subject to which they have been so long applied. H. B. 2d.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

THE "HELMET."

"*And take the helmet of salvation.*"---Eph. vi, 17.

The directions laid down for the observance of the christian by the Apostle, in the latter part of his epistle to the Ephesians, are of the most essential importance. In view of the state of the Christian Church as it existed in his day—and of the formidable opposition which it was called to encounter, he very justly compares the christian life to a warfare. He counsels his brethren in this vigorous language; "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, (or adversary.) For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." The armor of the christian is then designated, and among its parts the "helmet of Salvation" is mentioned.

We notice this portion of the armor, because it is, of all others, the most conspicuous. The helmet in ancient times was a head piece, or armor for the *head*. Isaiah, in speaking of the Messiah says, "he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and on his head the *helmet of salvation*." (lix, 17.) This comparison is a most beautiful one. And is it not also a correct one? Surely. The helmet which adorns the brow of the Christian is of more excellent worth than all earthly crowns, or priceless jewels of human distinction. Before its imposing front the powers of darkness must recoil, till victory and eternal triumph shall be shouted from all the innumerable ranks of the redeemed. Now terrible as is the power of the Soldier of the cross to those who are arrayed in opposition to the gospel of Christ, yet the timorous enemy that lies prostrate at his feet has nothing to fear—for as he lies disarmed and powerless beneath the spiritual warrior, if he casts his eye upward he will behold engraved on his frontlet the ever-living words SALVATION and REDEMPTION. This shall be the sign of the great Redeemer's triumph, as he rides forth "conquering and to conquer," and every true follower of him will not fail in his endeavors to obtain the "helmet of salvation."

Do we behold those who profess to be soldiers of the cross, who have their countenances suffused with stiffness and gloom, and their brow darkened with what may be termed *spiritual indignation*—do their eyes kindle with fearful excitement—and do their voices almost affect our organs of hearing as they pour forth the clamorous tones of everlasting damnation upon their *patient* hearers—to all such we would say: "fellow soldiers; although our armor may be deficient, yet we would say to you in the spirit of meekness, contend no longer until you have graced your brow with the beautiful *helmet* of *Salvation*. Then may you hope for victory through him who is our great leader, our glorious head, even the *Captain* of our Salvation."

Christian, of whatever sect or name! Have you espoused the cause of the blessed Redeemer? Then permit a humble writer to ask if you are in possession of the helmet of Salvation? Does it adorn your brow in all your conflicts with the world, the flesh and satan? Yea, can you encircle in the arms of faith and love a universe of beings in form and nature like yourself, and view them as the rightful property—the purchased possession of him who came "to seek and to save that which was lost;" and believing that he will ultimately "see the travail of his soul and be satisfied," are you led to "rejoice with joy unspeakable?" Then do you possess a peace which the world can neither give nor take away. Then rejoice with me, and let the "helmet of Salvation," ever be the *crown* of our rejoicing. Let us remember that it bears the impress of Divine, Eternal Love, and inspires the Soul with hopes the most animating and permanent—and together we can confidently exclaim in the adoring language of the Psalmist, "The Lord hath made known his Salvation—Sing unto the Lord, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day. O come let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our Salvation."

FROM THE ADVOCATE AND JOURNAL.

CONTROVERSY.

In the Vermont Chronicle of the 8th instant, there is an editorial article on the subject of religious controversy. We like the *sentiment* of the piece very much; it is this: there should be controversy; and it should be conducted in a proper manner, and with a proper spirit. We like his *opinion* also, and think it correct, viz. that there is an improvement in the manner and spirit of conducting religious controversy. But we are convinced there is still room for improvement.

Religious controversy can be conducted in such a manner as not to offend necessarily the most sensitive mind. The offence is generally in the *manner*, not in the controversy itself. A spirit of kindness, gentleness, and candor should be infused into every sentence; with which the most winning courtesy may constantly mingle: and yet the whole performance may contain the clearest statements, the most cogent arguments, and the greatest variety of reasoning; all illustrated with the most pungent and powerful reflections, seasoned, occasionally, with the most delicate and cutting satire. This last weapon, however, should be used sparingly; and can be used with advantage only by a very few. To attempt it without success, is to give certain and unpardonable offence.

Personal remarks constitute the head and front of offences in religious controversy, and never should be used if it be possible to avoid them. But when there must be a reference to persons, (and there must be sometimes) let it be made in the most candid, gentle, and favorable manner.

Nothing, in the history of the periodical press, political, literary or religious, has struck us more forcibly than the respect and authority its opinions and statements obtain in community, in proportion as its columns are imbued with the spirit of candor, courtesy, and a just respect for the opinions and persons of others. Periodical papers, as individual persons, acquire a distinctive character in community; and their weight and influence are in proportion to the purity and elevation of that character. Every correspondent of the press, therefore, should write in view of these great principles. He should compose carefully, correct his composition often and severely, before he sends it to the office; and he would do well to read it to a judicious friend, if he had such a one at hand.

In conclusion on this subject, in which we are deeply interested, we will propose the manner and spirit of Rev. John Fletcher, as a model to persons who correspond with the press, or write for it, on controverted subjects. In his controversial writings there is a correctness of position, force of argument, beauty of illustration, joined with a keen, and often satirical exposure of error, which all must admire, while the spirit in which it is done is such as all must approve. But Mr. Fletcher did not admit of a compromise between truth and error. His course was decided, and at the same time gentlemanly, frank, and conciliatory.

BLACK RIVER ASSOCIATION.

The Black River Association of Universalists met according to adjournment on the third Wednesday in June 1832, at Champion, N. Y. Br. S. R. Smith was appointed Moderator and Br. O. Whiston, Clerk. Universalist Societies in Mexico, Oswego, and Fulton, were received into fellowship. Circular by Br. Whiston, from which it appears the cause of Universal grace is steadily advancing in that region. Sermons on the occasion were delivered by Br. A. Wood, Br. Whiston, and two by Br. Smith. "Our public services," says the Circular, "were uncommonly well attended. On the last day of our session, at least one thousand people attended and listened with devout attention to the administration of the Gospel."

INSTALLATION.

On Sunday afternoon, 8th inst. Rev. Lucius R. Paige was Installed as Pastor of the Universalist Society, in Cambridgeport. Sermon by Br. S. Cobb, from 2 Cor. iii, 12. Brs. Thomas Jones, H. Ballou, 2d. B. Whittemore, and D. D. Smith took part in the services.

ANXIOUS MEETINGS.

The following description of a modern *Anxious Meeting*, is from the pen of a Mrs. *Trollope*, a late English writer. The meeting took place at Cincinnati, Ohio.

It was in the middle of summer, but the service we were recommended to attend did not begin till it was dark. The church was well lighted, and crowded almost to suffocation. On entering we found three priests standing side by side, in a sort of tribune, placed where the altar usually is, handsomely fitted up with crimson curtains, and elevated about as high as our pulpits. We took our places in a pew close to the rail which surrounds it.

The priest who stood in the middle was praying; the prayer was extravagantly vehement, and offensively familiar in expression; when this ended a hymn was sung, and then another priest took the centre place and preached. The sermon had considerable eloquence, but of a frightful kind. The preacher described, with ghastly minuteness, the last feeble fainting moments of human life, and then the gradual progress of decay after death, which he followed through every process up to the last loathsome stage of decomposition. Suddenly changing his tone, which had been that of sober, accurate description, into the shrill voice of horror, he bent forward his head, as if to gaze on some object beneath the pulpit, and made known to us what he saw in the pit that seemed to open before him. The device was certainly a happy one for giving effect to his description of hell. No image that fire, flame, brimstone, molten lead, or red hot pincers could supply, with flesh, nerves, and sinews, quivering under them, was omitted. The perspiration ran in streams from the face of the preacher; his eyes rolled, his lips were covered with foam, and every feature had the deep expression of horror it would have borne, had he, in truth, been gazing at the scene he described. The acting was excellent. At length he gave a languishing look to his supporters on each side, as if to express his feeble state, and then sat down and wiped the drops of agony from his brow.

The other two priests arose and began to sing a hymn. It was some seconds before the congregation could join as usual; every up-turned face looked pale and horror-struck. When the singing ended, another took the centre place, and began in a sort of coaxing affectionate tone, to ask the congregation if what their dear brother had spoken had reached their hearts? Whether they would avoid the hell he made them see? Come then, he continued, stretching out his arms towards them, come to us and tell us, and so we will make you see Jesus, the dear gentle Jesus, who shall save you from it. But you must come to him! You must not be ashamed to come to him! This night you shall tell him that you are not ashamed of him! We will make way for you, we will clear the bench for anxious sinners to sit upon. Come then, come to the anxious bench, and we will shew you Jesus! Come! come! come!

Again a hymn was sung, and while it continued, one of the three was employed in clearing one or two long benches that went across the rail, sending the people back to the lower part of the church. The singing ceased, and again the people were invited and exhorted not to be ashamed of Jesus, but to put themselves upon the anxious benches, and lay their heads upon his bosom. Once more we will sing, he concluded, that we may give you time. And again they sung a hymn.

And now in every part of the church a movement was perceptible, slight at first, but by degrees becoming more decided. Young girls arose, and sat down, and arose again; and then the pews opened, and several came tottering out, their hands clasped, their heads hanging on their bosom, and every limb trembling, and still the hymn went on; but as the poor creatures approached the rail, their sobs and groans became audible. They seated themselves on the anxious benches; the hymn ceased, and two of the three priests walked down from the tribune, and going, one to the right and the other to the left, began whispering to the poor tremblers seated there. These whispers were inaudible to us, but the sobs and groans increased to a frightful excess. Young creatures, with features pale and distorted, fell on their knees on the pavement, and soon sunk forward on their faces; the most violent cries and shrieks followed, while from time to time a voice was heard in convulsive accents, exclaiming, Oh! Lord Jesus! Help me, Jesus! and the like. Meanwhile the two priests continued to walk among them; they repeatedly mounted on the benches, and trumpet-mouthed proclaimed to the whole congregation, the tidings of salvation; and then from every corner of the building arose in reply, short sharp cries of Amen! Glory! Amen! while the prostrate penitents continued to receive whispered comfortings, and from time to time a mystic caress. More than once I saw a young neck encircled by a reverend arm. Violent hysterics and convulsions seized many of them, and when the tumult was at the highest, the priest who remained above gave out a hymn as if to drown it. It was a frightful sight to behold innocent young creatures, in the gay morning of existence, thus seized upon, horror-struck, and rendered feeble and enervated forever One young girl, apparently not more than fourteen, was supported in the arms of another, some years older; her face was as pale as death; her eyes wide open, and perfectly devoid of meaning; her chin and bosom wet with slaver; she had every appearance of idiotism. I saw a priest approach her, he took her delicate hand, Jesus is with her! Bless the Lord! he said, and passed on.

TEMPERANCE MEETING.

At a meeting held in the village of Mottville, pursuant to notice, for the purpose of taking into consideration the subject of intemperance, Ira Reynolds was chosen Chairman, and W. H. Allen, Secretary: after stating the object of the meeting and showing by the observation of several gentlemen present, the heart chilling effects of intemperance, it was

Resolved, That a temperance society established among us, would, in a great measure have a tendency to remove that evil from us.

Resolved, That this society be exclusively the working men and mechanics society; that no member's religious or political principles shall at any time be called in question, and that it shall be free from all enthusiasm and ecclesiastical authority, and free and untramelled from any sect or denomination whatever.

Resolved, That it behooves the working men and mechanics, and all others to examine and inquire, what is the cause that so many of our class are overwhelmed in misery and distress, having that ambition which is so essential to secure welfare and happiness, leaving us only as slaves to the tyrant or dupes to the designing man.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this meeting, that intemperance has in many cases been the cause of the evils of which we complain; and seeing the demoralizing effects which the drinking of ardent spirit has had in Society, it is the opinion of this meeting that it is the duty of every man who has the least feeling for himself or his fellow men, or the rising generations, to make use of all the just means within his power, to banish the monster intemperance from the land.

Resolved, That it shall at all times be the duty of the members of this institution, whenever they shall see a brother mechanic or any other man plunging himself into this gulf of destruction, like the good Samaritan to pour in the oil of persuasive language to heal the wound that he has given to virtue, and not point the finger of scorn at him, and in the language of self-righteousness say, "stand thou by! for I am holier than thou!"

Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be published in the Skaneateles Columbian.

IRA REYNOLDS, Chairman.

W. H. Allen, Secretary.

CHARACTER OF AN HONEST MAN.

"Honesty is the best policy. It is the poor man's estate, and the rich man's glory."

An honest man is the wisest man; for by his "policy" he secures himself, and benefits those with whom he has transactions. He is the best music, for his tongue, thoughts and actions, constitutes a just harmony. He is the richest man; for a good conscience which he always preserves is the choicest treasure. He is the wisest man; for true wisdom consists in choosing the pleasant ways of truth. He is the strongest of men; for true honesty or manly integrity, cannot be conquered either with threats or promises. "Come wind or sun, come fire or flood, his plain determination is, to do what is right." He is a true friend, a charitable enemy, a loyal subject, a good husband, a tender father, and a kind master. What is bad he condemns, as well in himself as others. He speaketh evil of nobody; but when he hears any discommended he endeavors to recollect what is commendable in him, and if he knows nothing favorable in his character, he pities him and is silent. He may receive an injury, but he cannot revenge it. He may repeat a promise, but he cannot break it although he may lose by its performance. His hands are in the world but his heart is out of it. He is pure as fire; as serene as air; supple as water, and lowly and fruitful as the earth. His losses enrich him; his afflictions rejoice him; and his mortifications comfort him. His diet is temperance; his apparel decency; his trade peace-making, his study forgiveness, his patrimony, eternal felicity. The Deity is his father; religion is his mother; truth his friend; chastity his company; justice his practice; honor his reward; and sincerity his spouse. His children are complacency, good humor, love and confidence. His brethren and kinsfolk are angels and good men—he is firm as a rock of the ocean, bold as a lion, mild as a lamb, wise as a serpent, harmless as a dove, constant as a turtle and—rare as a phœnix.

SPIRIT OF CHRISTIANITY.

"We know that every thing is affected that is touched by the spirit of Christianity. It touches the heart of the proud man, and he becomes humble as a little child; it touches the heart of the sensualist, and he becomes pure and heavenly; it touches the affections of the covetous, and he becomes liberal; it touches the heart of the revengeful, and they become forgiving and loving; it touches the idols of the heathen, ane they fall to the gronnd like Dagon before the ark of God; it touches the atmosphere of idolatry, and the glare of superstition is dissolved; it touches the fetters of the slave, and they fall off; it touches the ruthless despotisms of the earth, and they wither at its glance; it touches the hearts of the savages, and they take their place among civilized men; it sends its fructifying showers on the barren wilderness, and it blossoms as the rose; it smiles upon the desert, and the inhabitants of the rock, the wandering bushmen, sing for joy, and shout from the top of their mountains."

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE.

SATURDAY, JULY 21, 1832.

NOTICE.

Services for the present will be attended in the Orchard-street Church, at the usual hour in the morning, and at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The evening service will be dispensed with.

ANOTHER LABORER.

It is with feelings of no ordinary pleasure that we inform the public of the conversion to Universalism, of Mr. William Whittaker, and his determination to devote himself to the promulgation of "the glorious gospel of the blessed God." Mr. Whittaker is a native of Manchester, England, and son of the Rev. Mr. Whittaker, Congregationalist Clergyman of that place. He has been in the United States about three years, and for the greater part of the time has been prosecuting theological studies with a view of entering the ministry in the Episcopal Church, for which he has been a candidate the last 15 months. He has presented us testimonials relative to his christian character from various gentlemen, and among others one from the Minister, Wardens, and Vestrymen, of Grace Church, Waterford, N. Y. Our acquaintance with Br. Whittaker, though brief, has led us to entertain very favorable opinions of his talents. His appearance is prepossessing and his deportment worthy the gentleman and the christian. Last Sunday he addressed the Orchard-street Congregation, with very general acceptance.

It is highly gratifying to see individuals attached to a denomination possessing wealth, popularity, and perhaps we may say, pride, thus divesting themselves of prejudice and willing to sacrifice "the praise of men," which but too many love better than the smiles of an approving conscience, or "the praise of God," and embracing truth, though unpopular, and ready to "trust in God, who is the Savior of all men," and even to "labor and suffer reproach" in his cause of universal grace. We commend Br. Whittaker to the affections and kindness of Universalists generally, and may the great Head of the Church smile upon and bless him. S.

SCRIPTURE EXPLANATION.

Now the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field, which the Lord God had made; and he said unto the woman, Yea hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree in the garden? *Genesis* iii, 1.

The chapter from which this passage is selected, is confessedly one of difficult explanation. A transaction is here recorded which has important bearings upon the history of our race, and many of the doctrines inculcated in the christian world. Yet language is used which few will venture to call *literal*, and which, perhaps may be thought susceptible of various and widely different expositions.

A *serpent* is represented as *conversing* with the first woman and *tempting* her to transgress the law of God. Being but too successful in his subtlety he is again represented as falling under the curse of the Almighty, and condemned to go upon his belly and eat of the dust all the days of his life. We cannot but ask ourselves whether this account is to be understood as *literal*.

Dr. Adam Clarke, with a considerable show of learning, and, we may add, of weakness, has attempted to prove that what is here called *the serpent*, was an animal of the *simia* or *ape* kind, and that probably it was an ourang outang. See his Commentary. The learned Dr. has, however, been followed by few in this singular speculation. Professor Stuart, in speaking of the serpent, says,

"The effort of Dr. Clarke to prove that *nachash* here means an *ape* or *monkey*, is not only opposed to the *usus loquendi* [the usage of language] of the Hebrews, but the thing is in itself utterly improbable; for when or where has the ape been regarded as 'cunning above all the beasts of the field?' The *serpent*, however, is the known emblem of sagacity, in Egypt, and through the Eastern world."

But granting, that Dr. Clarke had made out an argument satisfactory to every mind, how much, we ask, would it help the explanation of the passage? Is it any more difficult to believe that a *serpent* was the cause of the first transgression than a *monkey*? It is, we believe, altogether unimportant what animal it was; if the passage must be understood literally, the difficulty remains undiminished. For in that case we are not only called upon to believe that animal once possessed the power of *speech*, but also the gift of *reason*, by which it was enabled to triumph over the boasted lord of creation.

"But," to use the language of Professor Stuart, "was this a *literal* serpent, or only a symbolical one? Did the writer attribute to a mere animal serpent all which the sequel discloses; or did he suppose the tempter to be an evil demon, whom he represents as in the shape of a serpent?" These are certainly important questions and we will let the Professor answer them.

"The latter," says he, "as I must believe; for (1) This accords with the commonly received traditions and language of the East. E. g the Zend-Avesta of Zoroaster attributes the first seduction of men to evil, to Ahriman, the prince of evil genii, under the shape of a serpent, Zend-Avesta, Vol. 1. p. 25. III. 84. seq. edit. Kleuker. The Jewish tradition is, that Sammael, the principal evil demon first seduced Eve, and led her to sin; see Eisenmenger, Entdecktes Judenthum, I. p. 822. (2) There is satisfactory evidence that the new Testament writers believed in the same thing. E. g. Rev. xii. 9. the devil or Satan, is called *the great dragon, that old serpent---which deceiveth the whole world:* and again Rev. xx, 2, the same appellations are repeated. See also 2 Cor. xi, 3. John viii, 44, where the Savior expressly recognizes the temptation of our first parents to sin, as the work of *the devil;* so in 1 John iii, 8. See also Wisd. ii, 24, where is the same sentiment. (3) The nature of the case is sufficient to show that the writer did not intend a mere literal serpent. Did the author really believe, that literal serpents could speak, and form plans for seducing to the commission of moral evil? If not, (and who will venture to charge him with such ignorance?) then must we suppose, that, like the writer of the Apocalypse he has represented the devil under the image or form of a serpent; see Rev. xii, 9. xx, 2. comp. 2 Cor. xi, 3. That a part of the representation which follows, seems to be applicable only to a literal serpent, is merely the consequence of the writer's carrying on, through the whole narration, a uniform consistency in the mode of representation, which he had adopted at the beginning." Heb. Chrest. pp. 135, 136.

From the above singular paragraph we learn that Professor Stuart does not believe that a literal serpent was intended in the account we are considering, and in the sequel we shall find that he has about as little faith in the notion of a visible form and an audible voice. Hence the whole account is, in his view, symbolical. He believes most religiously, however, that "the writer, [Moses] supposes the tempter to be an evil demon, whom he represents as in the shape of a serpent." We will take the liberty of examining the grounds of this opinion. The first reason the learned Professor assigns is, that, "this accords with the commonly received traditions and language of the east," and as proofs, he refers to the Zend-Avesta of Zoroaster and the traditions of the Jews. It is certainly unfortunate that he could not have appealed to Moses himself, or at least to some one of the Old Testament writers. Yet they, we must believe, are profoundly silent on the subject, or a learned divine and theological Professor, who has shown himself not over fastidious about proofs to support his creed, would have detected in their writings some intimation of the doctrine he has so confidently advanced. One thing seems evident, and Professor Stuart has virtually acknowledged it; and that is, that *Moses himself said nothing plainly of the devil, or prince of evil genii.* We are of course compelled to resort to the Persian impostor and the Jewish "traditions," by which in olden time they had made void the law of God, in order to find *any, the slightest* proofs that the devil, or prince of evil genii, was the cause of the first transgression. Humiliating as this may be to the advocates of that doctrine, it must be done, and Professor Stuart has given a noble example. Henceforward let no one despair of supporting any doctrine or absurdity he may choose. For if the Scriptures are silent, probably it will be found clearly stated in the Zend-Avesta, the Koran, or the Talmud. But let us observe that the Zend-Avesta of Zoroaster was either written before or after the history of Moses. If before, and Moses copied his account from it, is it not singular that he did not express himself as clearly as his master? Is it not strange that he did not inform us that man was seduced to evil by Ahriman, or the prince of evil genii, under the form of a serpent? Yet Moses hints nothing of the kind. But if Moses wrote before Zoroaster, then his account, in which nothing is said of the devil, is not to be explained by the fictions which that impostor has added to the verities of his history. Taken either way the Zend-Avesta cannot on this subject be received as a commentary on Moses. And we regret to see Professor Stuart driven to such miserable shifts. The case is still worse in relation to the traditions of the Jews. Professor Stuart is fully aware that the Jews knew nothing of Sammael until the Babylonian captivity. Previous to that time the Jews had known little, if any thing, of the devil, and had no name for any of the good and much less for the bad angels, of whom Sammael was a principal. Now we ask, if the traditions of the Jews, which had

their origin in the fictions of the heathen, are to be our guide on a subject of this nature, where the inspired writings are utterly silent? Are these traditions, foolish and ridiculous as they are, to be introduced in explanation of the sacred scriptures?

But let us examine the Professor's "satisfactory evidence, that the New Testament writers believed," that our our first parents were seduced by an "evil demon," "a prince of evil genii." We are happy to see him turning from the traditions of Jews and the foolery of paganism to the acknowledged word of God. The first passage quoted in proof of so confident an assertion as the above, is Rev. xii, 9. "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan which deceiveth the whole world." The same appellations are repeated, Rev. xx, 2. It cannot but be observed in this passage upon which the chief reliance is placed, that the writer says nothing of an "evil demon," who tempted our first parents. Nor does he even intimate that the *old serpent* of whom he speaks was the identical "prince of evil genii" whom Moses *may be supposed* to have designated *the serpent*. All this must be taken for granted, before the assumed proof has any weight. But this is not all. By even a slight attention to the context we shall see that this "old serpent" instead of being an "evil demon," was a "great *red dragon*, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven and did cast them to the earth." It would seem also that this "evil demon," this *old serpent* was in HEAVEN, even in the time of John or after his day. How sadly this corresponds with popular opinion we need not say. One must indeed be driven to extremities when no better proof than this can be found in the whole word of God in favor of so darling a tenet. For the remaining proofs alleged by Professor Stuart as "satisfactory evidence that the New Testament writers believed" *an evil demon* to have been the cause of the first transgression, we refer first to 2 Cor. xi, 2. Here it is only necessary to remark that St. Paul was as silent as Moses had been before him with respect to the "prince of evil genii." "But I fear," said he, "lest by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds" &c. And this is "satisfactory evidence," that Paul believed an evil demon to have been the tempter of Eve!! Another proof is found in John viii, 44, "where," says Professor Stuart, "the Savior *expressly* recognises the temptation of our first parents as the work of *the devil*," Let us read the passage. "Ye are of your father the devil and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father of it." We look in vain for an *express* recognition of *the devil* as the tempter of our first parents!! We almost doubt our senses when we read the Professor's unqualified assertion and compare it with the passage before us. The Savior says nothing of *the devil* as the tempter of our first parents. He does not even allude as we discover to them; and yet a learned divine and we would believe an honest man asserts most positively that he "expressly recognises the temptation of our first parents as the work of *the devil*." The next and only remaining reference to the acknowledged canon is 1 John. iii, 8. "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." We see nothing here to justify the notion that an "evil demon" tempted Eve. Nothing is said of her or her temptation. We pity the cause that can find no better proofs than these, that must rely wholly for support on prejudice and positive assertion, unsanctioned even by a shadow of evidence. The authority of the Apocryphal book of Wisdom, ii, 24, well corresponds with the Zend-Avesta of Zoroaster and the traditions of the Jews. It is the best and we will say, the only proof the Professor has adduced in favor of his speculation. But it is really discouraging when an important doctrine of revelation is thus compelled to go begging witnesses which itself condemns as notorious falsifiers.

The third and last reason assigned by Professor Stuart, why Moses *supposed* the tempter to be "an evil demon," is that "the nature of the case is sufficient to show that the writer did not intend a mere *literal* serpent." This logic is not perfectly satisfactory to our mind. This argument, if so it must be called, assumes, that because Moses did not intend a mere *literal* serpent, therefore he did intend "an evil demon." In a better cause Professor Stuart would not fail to use better logic. Dr. Clarke might as well say "because it was not a serpent that tempted Eve, therefore it was a monkey." Yet in either case the conclusion is very far from the premises, and no way dependant thereon.

We have already occupied much more time than we had at first intended. But the subject is important and that is our apology. At a future time we shall resume the explanation. S.

"THE GOLD BEADS,"

OR VERY PRETTY THINGS.

We copy the following from the N. Y. Evangelist. It is valuable as showing the Spirit of the times, and particularly the taste of our religious friends. Gold beads and finger rings are very pretty to be sure, but how happens it that we hear nothing of gold watch keys, seals, and chains? We have seen such things in our day even among the professed ministers of Christ. "The beads which he exhibited." It seems then Br. Patton excited the "bowels of mercy" among the ladies by holding up a string of gold beads!! Very pretty indeed. The real "old fashioned large round beads of *yellow*, not of *red* gold"!!! Beautiful indeed! The story of the poor woman giving the remembrancer of her mother excites other feelings than those of pleasure. Behold a professed minister of Christ, "dressed in fine linen and fareing sumptuously every day," turned mendicant and filching from the poor woman the last memento of a mother's love! See him belieing the very gospel he professes to preach, and deceiving the ignorant but honest creature with the delusive and wicked hope that this token "might be the means of *saving souls*"!! SAVING SOULS!! This trade then is to be carried on even in Protestant lands, and a piece of gold, since "the precious blood of Christ" is counted an unholy and unavailing thing, is to be bartered for the salvation of souls! We pity the deceived; what shall we say of the deceivers?

"The editor of the Philadelphian gives an account of Mr. Patton's address, in which he told the story of the gold beads given to the sailors' cause by a poor widow in Fair Haven, whose father, husband, and only son were all sailors, and all dead. Dr. Ely adds,

"Mr. Patton hoped it would no longer be said "we shall get a poor collection because the church is filled with ladies;" and he thought he might pledge his native city, Philadelphia, for the supposrt of at least one of the foreign missionaries of the Seamen's Friend Society. The beads which he exhibited were the old fashioned large round beads of *yellow*, not of *red* gold, which were given when they were worth the best cow on a farm. Mr. Patton succeeded so well with his fishing line that he *hooked* up *twenty-five* golden rings from his audience, which were worth 50 cents each on an average. We are sorry that the more valuable rings did not slide from many a fair hand; but as the little rings actually given were commonly used to hold the more weighty ones on, perhaps they will come, on the next application of similar importance.

The example brought some chains and rings from the 3d Presbyterian church on the Wednesday following, one of which was worth eight or ten dollars: and in the Rev. James Patterson's congregation a poor woman sent a ring, which might be valued at two dollars saying that it had been left to her by her deceased mother, and long kept as a remembrance, and that she would not have parted with it on any account, but in hope that it might be the means of saving souls, by assisting to support some missionary to the poor heathen.

We have no wish to annihilate the trade of the gold and silver smith; but if we love the gospel and the souls of men more than gold and silver ornaments, we shall cheerfully part with them when needed, so long as any who prize not the soul will give food and clothing for them to any herald of salvation."

"BEAUTIFUL EXTRACT."

A paragraph under this head has been copied into almost all our papers. It will be recollected as commencing thus; "*I saw a mourner standing at eventide, over the grave of one dearest to him on earth.*" It has met with universal admiration, and some of our editorial brethren have expressed a wish to know its author. We are happy in being able to say, that it is an extract from a sermon by the lamented Rev. Mr. Christmas, late pastor of the Bowery (Presbyterian) Church, N. Y. The affecting picture presented in the extract was recognized, as drawn from himself. He had, at the time, but recently lost his partner in life; emphatically "one dearest to him on earth." Mr. Christmas died, while yet in the flush and strength of youth, admired for his talents, beloved for his virtues, and lamented by all who knew him. S.

RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

In the last Inquirer, the Publisher informs his readers of an arrangement by which Br. Charles Spear of Brewster, Mass. is to become its Editor. He will soon remove to the field of his labors. We congratulate the Publisher and Patrons of the Inquirer, on this arrangement, which we are confident will be found much to their mutual satisfaction and profit. Br. Spear we regard as one of our *best* young men and one of our *best* writers. He possesses a *good* heart and a *clear* head. Modest and unassuming, he generally receives, as he always merits, the respect and confidence of his friends and the community. We had indulged the hope of having him nearer New-York; but we yield him not without reluctance however, to a sphere of more extensive usefulness. We have but one fear, and that is, that his health, which has for some time been delicate, will prove insufficient for the labors he will necessarily be called upon to perform. S.

MAINE CONVENTION.

This body of Universalists met in annual session on the last Wednesday in June, and organized by appointing Br. Rayner, Moderator, and Brs. Dinsmore and Wellington, Clerks. Letters of fellowship were conferred on Brs. John G. Adams of Freeport, Darius Fobes of Paris, David T. Stevens, of Sumner, and renewed to Br. G. P. Leonard of Albion. The Convention conferred ordination upon Br. Alanson St. Clair, of Steuben. Br. Fayette Mace was upon his request dismissed from the fellowship of that Convention. Resolutions were passed in favor and recommendatory of the Universalist Expositor, and the cause of Temperance. Adjourned to meet at Montville, last Wednesday of June, 1833.

The request of our friend, J. G. of Holmesville, Ga. will be attended to in the course of a few weeks. We cannot promise that we shall perfectly satisfy his mind on the subjects to which he alludes. Had he been more explicit, and referred us to the passage he wished explained, it would have rendered our task not only more easy, but more pleasant. S.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

A HINT TO YOUNG PREACHERS.

Something like a year after entering upon the duties of the ministry, I spent an evening with a venerable and worthy gentleman, who afterwards became my father-in-law. He was of the Baptist persuasion, and a bright ornament to his profession. Among other topics of conversation, that of *great preachers* became a subject of discourse. Full of enthusiastic zeal, and favored by Providence with a ready utterance and commanding voice, I had succeeded in my itinerant labors very far beyond my expectations; and withal had already felt some itchings to become a *great preacher*. I mentioned the names of some in my own order, the splendor of whose talents eclipsed, in my opinion, the brilliancy of all others. The old gentleman, in turn, enumerated a number who were the most distinguished among the Baptists. But, said he, for my part, I prefer a *good preacher* to a *great one*. These words, connected with the artless and sound gravity with which they were uttered, touched the very quick of my soul. I saw the propriety of them, and after meditating upon them a short time, settled down upon the resolution to become a *good preacher*, if possible, and never to indulge inquietude about *ministerial greatness*. Though this occurrence was almost twenty years ago, I have not, I believe, from that time to this, arranged a sermon without recollecting the remark of my venerable friend and parent. Will the discourse be a good one? This circumstance, it is believed, though trivial in itself, may be useful to those who have just commenced their labors "in the ministry of reconciliation." They are prone to thirst for professional eminence, and if they associate in their mind, genuine eminence with real holiness and moral virtue, the desire is commendable and salutary. But the glare of splendid talents, the charm of popularity, and of public applause, are too apt to dazzle their eyes, and deceive their hearts. I have rarely known an instance in which a preacher, young or old, attempted to deliver what the world would call a great sermon, without failing, and tormenting his audience with a bad one. A great sermon, in the popular acceptation of the term, is one in which the sentiments and descriptions soar far beyond the common capacities. Now a moment's sober reflection will convince us, that a sentiment or a description so humble that our loftiest vision cannot perceive it, is as suitable and useful to us as the one which soars so sublimely that our little eyes cannot reach it. Let the minister of Christ bear in mind, that goodness is sterling greatness, and he will walk in the right way, "the path of the just that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." These hasty remarks may, if duly improved, be profitable to societies which are destitute of the stated ministry of the word. Guided by the rule here recommended, they will find but little difficulty in obtaining an acceptable preacher; one who will promote their "growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." They should remember that there are, comparatively, but few in the vineyard of our Lord and Master, who are distinguished for natural talents, but many, who let their measure of "light shine before men." I close my remarks by repeating, that goodness is sterling greatness; and the only greatness about which a rational creature can, with propriety, indulge a moment's anxiety. S. S.

DIED,

In Columbus, Ohio, on the 3d instant, Mr. Samuel M. Rockwell, formerly of Norwalk, Ct. By a letter written a few days before his death, it appears he had embraced the happy doctrine of God's universal grace, which afforded him great consolation in the prospect of approaching death. He asks the question, "Should a Universalist fear to die? No: for he feels assured that the spirit returns to God who gave it." He expressed himself perfectly reconciled to God and willing to leave this world. "Let it be known" said he "that I die a firm believer in the salvation of all men. These are the last words from your dying brother."

In Fultonville, Montgomery Co. N. Y. Mrs. Eliza C. Gardenier, aged 21. She was calm and serene to the last moment of her life, relying with confidence on the belief that "herself, her friends and the whole world would meet together in ceaseless bliss beyond the grave. Even opposers were obliged to admit her doctrine *good to die by*."

At Cayuga Creek, Erie Co. Mr. Stephen W. Standard, aged 42. He was an ardent supporter of Universalism, both by precept and example.

In Buffalo, Miss Cecilia Sill, aged 18. Early in life she became dissatisfied with partial views of salvation, and was led to search the Scriptures for herself, and without conversation with Universalists, or the aid of their books, she became fully satisfied that God is indeed the Savior of *all*, specially of those that believe.

In Little Falls, Mrs. Alsee Holmes, aged 51. Through a severe sickness, she was abundantly sustained by the cheering promise of God, that in Christ all nations, families and kindreds of the earth should be blessed, and that immortal joys should be the portion of all.

At Oneida Creek, Mr. Nathaniel Foster, aged 35. Through a lingering illness he sustained a cheering faith in a blissful immortality for all mankind.

In Marietta, Pa. Mr. P. F. Miner. His complaint was an affection of the lungs, that continued for months, during which he frequently expressed to those around him, the unspeakable joy he experienced in believing God the Savior of all.

LETTERS AND REMITTANCES,

Received at this office, ending July 18th.

J. C. W. Southold, L. I. $2; Rev. R. S. Middletown, Ct.: of M. W. T. this city, for Rev. J. W. H. Hampden, Me. $2; Rev. S. J. H. Granby, Ct.; P. M. Danbury, Ct.; S. P. Hanover, N. J.; P. M. Holmesville, Ga. $1; J. E. Augusta, Ga. for himself, $2; C. J. C. $4; J. S. Barnwell Court House, S. C. $2; E. O. Clinton, Ga. $2; G. R. Norwalk, Ct.; G. W. Montgomery, Ala. $4, for M. B. Montgomery, and J. A. Mount Meigs, Mont. Co. Ala.

UNIVERSALIST BOOKS

Of every description that can be obtained in the United States, are kept constantly for sale, wholesale and retail, at the lowest prices, at the Trumpet Office, 40 Cornhill, Boston.—Among these are Ancient and Modern Histories of Universalism—Balfour's Works in full—Ballou's Works—Smith on Divine Government—Whittemore on the Parables—Petitpierre on Divine Goodness, Winchester's Dialogues, &c. &c. Tracts. A Sermon on the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, another on that of the Sheep and Goats. Counterpart to the famous orthodox Tract, called the Strange Thing, which is strange enough surely. One hundred Arguments for Universalism. The proprietor of the Trumpet Office has taken measures to be supplied with a full assortment of all the Universalist Works, published in the United States and in England. T. WHITTEMORE.

NEW MEETING HOUSE.

The frame of a Universalist Meeting House in Waterville, Me. was raised on the 9th instant. It is designed to be an elegant building.

RELIGIOUS NOTICE.

Br. B. B. HALLOCK will preach at Peekskill, Sunday, July 29.

AGENTS FOR THE MESSENGER.

NEW-YORK.
T. Purdy, Rye.
Post Master, or Epenetus Howe, North Salem.
H. Bailey, Somers.
J. M'Coy, Peekskill.
J. Smith, Beekman.
Milton B. Allerton, Dover.
G. M. Perry, Dover Plain.
Hiram Price, Amenia.
Rev'd T. J. Whitcomb, Hudson.
S. Van Schaack, Albany.
Publisher of the Anchor, Troy.
Publisher of the Magazine, or D. Heald, Utica.
Everitt E. Guild, Walton.
Rev. R. O. Williams, Amsterdam.
Nathan Sawyer, Medina.
A. M'Lean, P. M. Adams.
Rev. L. L. Saddler, LeRoy.
B. M. Underhill, Wolcott.
A. Wells, P. M., Wells Corner.
M. W. Riggs, Avon.
George Gorton, East Avon.
J. D. Cooper, Kempville.
S. L. Hayes, Cairo.
Rev. O. Whiston, Oswego.
Rev. G. W. Montgomery. or Benj. Caryl, Buffalo.
E. Benedict, Plattsburgh.
Rev. S. R. Smith, Clinton.
James M'Entee, Kingston.

CONNECTICUT.
Roswell Husted, Stanwich.
G. Lounsbery, Long Ridge.
Fred. A. Smith, Stamford.
N. S. Bailey or L. H. Finch, Norwalk.
A. Gray, or J. D. Taylor, Saugatuck.
O. C. Sanford, Weston.
A. Price, Danbury.
H. Fairchild, Newtown.
F. P. Ambler, Trumbull.
A. A. M'Neil, Bridgeport.
P. M. or Daniel Williams, Stratford.
Hezekiah Scott, Ridgefield.
Rev. T. Fisk, or J. Duntz, New-Haven.
Rev. J. Boyden, Berlin.
Rev. R. Smith, Middletown.
Rev. L. F. W. Andrews, or B. Sperry, Publisher of the Inquirer, Hartford.
Elijah Porter, P. M. East Windsor.
Francis Thayer, Winchester.
Post Master, Waterbury.
Post Master, New London.
E. P. Smith, Norwich.
Rev. N. Dodge, Waterford.

RHODE ISLAND.
S. W. Wheeler, Providence

MASSACHUSETTS.
Editor of the Trumpet, or Marsh, Capen & Lyon, Boston
Rev. H. Ballou, 2d, Roxbury.
John Kenrick, Newton.
Franklin Woodham, Pittsfield.

NEW-HAMPSHIRE.
Rev. T. F. King, Portsmouth.
Rev. W. S. Balch, Claremont.
Editors of the Patriot, Concord.

MAINE.
Publishers of the Intelligencer, Gardiner.
Rev. James W. Haskins, Hampden.
Rev. M. Rayner, Portland.

VERMONT.
Publisher of the Watchman, Woodstock.
Benj. Sawyer, Jr. Reading.
C. Mahoney, Derby.
Isaac Blodget, P. M. Randolph.
Post Master, or Charles Pierce, Chester.

NEW-JERSEY.
Aaron Baldwin, Newark.
Thomas Day, Camptown.
Post Master, Kingston.
Samuel C. Johnes, Hightstown.
Jos. M. Brown, Augusta.
P. M., New Brunswick.
D. Bromley, Bloomfield.

PENNSYLVANIA.
Revs. A. C Thomas and Z. Fuller, Philadelphia.
Wm. George, Pottstown.
John K. Wright, Easton.
R. Edgecomb, Cowdenspost.
Selfridge & Wilson, Allingtown.
Editors American Manufacturer, Pittsburgh.
J. Kingsbury, P. M. Sneshequin.
Samuel Ritter, P. M. Reading.
J. Mouk, Marietta.

SOUTH CAROLINA.
Hugh Caperton, Union, Monroe Co.
S. P. Bailey, P. M. Union Court House.

NORTH CAROLINA.
George Nichols, Plymouth.

GEORGIA.
J. Wickers, Worther's store
J. Ellis, Augusta.
A. Green, P. M. Green Hill.
James Eppinger, Savannah.

OHIO.
Wm. Pitt Putnam, Belpre.

LOUISIANA.
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ALABAMA.
Green Wood, Montgomery
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A. Sheppard, Pleasant Hill, Dallas Co.
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Jona. Hill, Allenton, Wilcox Co.
N. Grigsley, Selma.

MISSISSIPPI.
E. G. Peyton, Gallatin.

ILLINOIS.
S. T. Sawyer, Edwardsville

FLORIDA.
Wm. Hollingsworth, P. M. Bailey's Mills, Jeff'n Co.

MICHIGAN TERRITORY.
Eben. Davis, Tecumseh

UPPER CANADA.
L. Cruttenden, Oxford, Ox. District.

SMILES.

BY THE REV. ROBERT CAUNTER.

Sweet smile! that lights the baby cheek,
Where ne'er the touch of woe has been;
Whose dimples innocently speak
How guiltless is the heart within:—
O! how thy radiance, purely bright,
Illumes the little cherub's eye,
As if a ray of heavenly light
Had dropped upon it from the sky.

Fond smile! that o'er the mother's brow,
Whilst gazing on her infant's face,
Kindles with rapture's purest glow,
The features of the sire to trace;
How dost thou light her lucid eye,
Distilling fast the tender tear,
With all a mother's ecstacy,
And yet with all a mother's fear!

Dear smile! that round the husband's lip
Curls into anxious tenderness,
Whilst from joy's cup he seems to sip
Whate'er *may* charm, whate'er *can* bless;
Whilst gazing on the loveliest thing
His heart adores beneath the skies,
Thou tell'st that woe's envenomed sting
Has not yet cursed his Paradise.

Soft smile! that when his growing boy
Pursues his gambols at his side,
Becomes the index of his joy,
And beams with all the father's pride,—
'Tis beautiful to see thee play
O'er his rough features, bronzed and dun,
Like light, ere yet the early day
Has usher'd up the brighter sun.

Chaste smile! that o'er the kindling blush
Of innocence so purely steals,
Adding new graces to the flush,
Which all the guileless heart reveals,—
How lovely to behold thee there,
O'er ev'ry feature brightly beaming,
Like meteor in the spring-tide air,
Around the moon's fair circle streaming!

Kind smile! that kindles when the rod
Of stern affliction has been broken,
Irradiate from the throne of God,
And of his love the purest token,
When round the lips thy beauties hover,
Like brighest stars in summer weather,
Thou dost the *heart* and *soul* discover,
And shedst thy light on both together.

Pure smile! that innocently steals
Over religion's lovely features,
And to the guilty heart appeals,
Of God's poor woe-benighted creatures,—
Thou mutely eloquent, to all
Tell'st of impieties forgiven,
And from afflictions heavy thrall
Cheerest the struggling soul to heaven.

NIGHT SCENE AT NIAGARA.

I had wandered one evening in a vast forest, at some distance from the cataract of Niagara: I soon beheld the day gradually extinguished around me, and enjoyed, in all its solitude the beauteous prospect of night amid the deserts of the new world.

An hour after sunset, the moon appeared above the trees in the horizon. A balmy breeze which the Queen of night brought with her from the east, seemed to precede her in the forests, like her perfumed breath. The lonely luminary slowly ascended in the heavens, now peacefully pursuing her azure course, and now reposing on groups of clouds which resembled the summits of lofty snow-covered mountains. These clouds folding or expanding their veils, rolled themselves out into transparent zones of white satin dispersed into light flakes of foam or formed in the heavens bright beds of down so lovely to the eye, that you would have imagined you felt their softness and their elasticity.

The scenery on earth was not less enchanting: the soft bluish beams of the moon darted through the intervals between the trees, and their streams of light penetrated into the obscurity of profound darkness. The river that glided at my feet, was glistening with the constellations of night, now reflected on its bosom. In a vast plain beyond this stream, the radiance of the moon reposed without motion on the verdure. Birch trees scattered here and there in the savannah, and agitated by the breeze, formed islands of floating shadows on a motionless sea of light. Near me all was silence and repose save the fall of some leaf, the transient rustling of a sudden breath of wind or the rare and interrupted hootings of the owl; but at a distance was heard, at intervals, the solemn roar of the fall of Niagara, which amid the calm of night, was prolonged from desert to desert, and died away among the solitary forests.

The grandeur, the astonishing solemnity of the scene, human language is inadequate to express; nor can the most delightful night in Europe afford any idea of them. In vain may imagination seek to extend itself in our cultivated fields, it every where meets with the habitation of men: but in these desert regions the mind loves to penetrate into an ocean of forests, to wander on the banks of prodigious lakes, to soar above the abyss of cataracts, and as it were to find itself alone before God.

THE WIFE.

"Feel'st thou no joy, no quiet happiness,
No soothing sense of satisfaction, in
Loving and being loved? Is there no weight
Removed from the heart, in knowing there is one,
To share all, bear all with thee? To soothe grief—
Yea, to soften away its human pain
By a superior love, the cup to temper
With words of consolation and sweet hope,
That even its very bitterness shall seem sweet,
Forgotten in the love that offers it!"—*E. L. Reade.*

Woman's love, like the rose blossoming in the arid desert, spreads its rays over the barren plain of the human heart, and while all around it is black and desolate, it rises more strengthened from the absence of every other charm. In no situation does the love of women appear more beautiful, than in that of wife; parents, brethren, and friends, have claims upon the affections; but the love of a wife is of a distinct and different nature. A daughter may yield her life to the preservation of a parent, a sister may devote herself to a suffering brother, but the feelings which induce her to this conduct are not such as those which lead a WIFE to follow the husband of her choice through every pain and peril that can befal him, to watch over him in danger, to cheer him in adversity, and even remain unalterable at his side in the depth of ignominy and shame. It is an heroic devotion which a woman displays in her adherence to the fortunes of a hapless husband; when we behold her in her domestic scenes, a mere passive creature of enjoyment; an intellectual toy, brightening the family circle with her endearments and prized for the extreme joy which that presence and those endearments are calculated to impart, we can scarcely credit that the fragile being who seems to hold her existence by a thread, is capable of supporting the extreme of suffering; nay, when the heart of man sinks beneath the weight of agony that SHE should maintain her pristine powers of delight, and by her words of comfort and patience, lead the distracted murmurer to peace and resignation.

CHRISTIANITY,

Is all mildness and beauty; it breathes nothing but pure benevolence in God; it appeals to the best feelings of men. It is essentially a religion of love; it has no dark shades mingled with its brilliancy. It affords every encouragement to virtue and every discouragement to vice; and it evidently indicates the approach of a time in which truth shall triumph over error, felicity become universal, and God be all in all.

UNIVERSALIST BOOKSTORE.

The Publisher of the Christian Messenger acquaints his friends and patrons that he is now opening, at the office of the Messenger, 85 1-2 Bowery, New-York, a general UNIVERSALIST BOOK DEPOSITORY. It is his intention to keep constantly on hand Universalist BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, &c. of every description that can be obtained in the United States, *Wholesale* and *Retail*. Publishers of Universalist Books and Pamphlets will confer a favor by forwarding a supply of their works, immediately after publication. The importance of an establishment like the above in this city must be apparent, and the undersigned relies with confidence on the Universalist public for support in he undertaking. Among he Boo ks t may be found Ancient and Modern History of Universalism; Balfour's Works, in full; Smith on Divine Government, Whittemore on the Parables, Ballou's Works, Petitpierre on Divine Goodness, Winchester's Dialogues, Pickering's Lectures, Streeter's Hymn Books, various prices, Morse's Reply to Parker's Lectures, a variety of Unitarian Books, Tracts, &c. together with an extensive assortment of Sermons, by different authors. For the greater accommodation of persons friendly to the undertaking, the Proprietor is connecting with the above, a small but general assortment of BIBLES, TESTAMENTS, SCHOOL BOOKS, BLANK BOOKS, STATIONARY, &c. all of which will be furnished at the lowest terms. The patronage of friends from the country, as well as those in the city, is respectfully solicited.

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P. PRICE.

New-York, May 26, 1822.

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